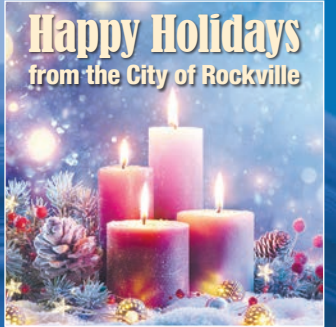




RockvilleReports

DECEMBER 2021 • VOL. 67 #10



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City Hall to Reopen in New Year

Rockville City Hall will reopen to the public, Monday, Jan. 3.

City Manager Rob DiSpirito announced the reopening at the Mayor and Council's Nov. 15 meeting.

"I strongly believe that employee collaboration and level of service to customers will benefit by reopening all city offices, including bringing employees back on site at City Hall," DiSpirito said in an email announcing the return to Rockville employees.

Rockville City Hall has been closed since March 14, 2020, in an effort to protect the health of Rockville employees and the public, and prevent the spread of COVID-19 throughout the pandemic.

Rockville employees are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19, unless

exempt for religious or medical reasons. Employees with approved exemptions are required to undergo mandatory weekly COVID-19 testing. The policy covers temporary, part-time and full-time employees who work onsite and remotely.

Other city facilities are open, including community centers, the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, Glenview Mansion and Croydon Creek Nature Center at the Civic Center, the Rockville Senior Center, and the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center. Check the city's website for hours and availability.

Face coverings are mandatory for staff and visitors, aged 2 and older, to Rockville facilities, whatever their vaccination status. The City of Rockville will not ask visitors to share their vaccination status. ✚

Kirk-Dantzler Named Director of Communication, Berg Named Assistant City Manager

Kathy Kirk-Dantzler, manager of the city's Rockville 11 television station, will be promoted to the city's director of communication, and Director of Communication and Engagement Marylou Berg will be transferred to assistant city manager, effective this month, City Manager Rob DiSpirito announced in November.

The reassignments, which take effect Wednesday, Dec. 1, are "for the purpose of better addressing current organizational needs and Mayor and Council priorities," DiSpirito said.

An Emmy Award-nominated senior news producer, Kirk-Dantzler has over 20 years of experience in TV production, station management, radio programming, writing and producing for television and radio, strategic communications planning, social media, broadcast journalism, and community outreach. She has led Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, since 2015, developing the station into a premier municipal TV operation.

"I am excited and honored to be Rockville's next director of communication," Kirk-Dantzler said. "I look forward to evolving the city's communication to ensure that Rockville's priorities to highlight its diversity, equity and inclusion continue to be part of the



Kirk-Dantzler



Berg

city's community engagement and outreach."

As part of the City Manager's Office, the Public Information Division works to increase resident and employee understanding and awareness of, and participation in, city government programs, projects, and services. The division partners with city departments to coordinate a strategic approach to communication through city publications, the website, marketing, direct mail, the "Rockville Reports" newsletter, social media, email newsletters, Rockville 11, video on demand and other media.

Kirk-Dantzler will report to Deputy City Manager Angela Judge.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have Kathy as part of our team," DiSpirito said. "Her vision, energy and passion for improving communications with our residents, and within this city organization, will serve us

continued on pg. 5...

Christmas and New Year's Holiday Weekends Bring Closures in Rockville

City government will be closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Friday, Dec. 24 and Saturday, Dec. 25, and on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Friday, Dec. 31 and Saturday, Jan. 1.

The Rockville Senior Center; Croydon Creek Nature Center; Lincoln Park, Thomas Farm and Twinbrook community centers; Glenview Mansion; the Rockville Civic Center business office; and the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre box office will be closed. Theater tickets are always available at www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre.

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will be open with limited services and activities on Friday, Dec. 24 and Friday, Dec. 31, and will be closed on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter for details.

Recycling and trash are not collected on Fridays or Saturday. For more information on recycling and trash collection, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or call 240-314-8568.

Parking will be free at city-owned meters on Dec. 24, Dec. 25, Dec. 31 and Jan. 1.

Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-5000.

During COVID, please check our online resources to see if any information contained in this edition of "Rockville Reports" has changed.

Looking Back on a Busy 2021

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Rockville's government kept moving forward throughout 2021, and several major initiatives came to fruition.

JANUARY

Maryland must make more COVID-19 vaccine doses available to Montgomery County residents, the Mayor and Council wrote in a Jan. 26 letter to the state.

"The City is deeply concerned about the low number of vaccines that are being distributed to the Montgomery County Department of Health and

Human Services (DHHS), relative to other Maryland jurisdictions," the letter said.

The new Rockville skate park construction was well underway, with concrete being poured to form some of its obstacles. The new 15,000-square-foot concrete skate venue, located in the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center outdoor pool parking lot, at 355 Martins Lane, replaced the old wood and steel park, which had deteriorated after close to two decades in operation.

FEBRUARY

The Mayor and Council ad-

opted a zoning amendment to allow implementation of the East Rockville Design Guidelines and Standards. The guidelines include requirements, in addition to the existing residential zoning, that apply to new single-unit home construction and significant additions to existing homes.

The City of Rockville was the top-scoring Maryland municipality in an analysis of cities' energy efficiency and renewable energy strategies. Rockville scored 27 out of 70 on the City Clean Energy Scorecard for electric vehicle charging stations at Thomas Farm Community Center, placing it seventh among 30 small and

mid-sized cities that were nationally ranked.

MARCH

Construction began on the pedestrian bridge linking Rockville Town Center and the Rockville Metro Station over Rockville Pike.

The city ranked seventh overall and fourth among small cities in the U.S. for its ethnic diversity, placing highly once again in an annual WalletHub study. Rockville, Gaithersburg, Germantown and Silver Spring occupied the top four spots on WalletHub's list and four of the top 10 spots among all cities, of any size, in the entire United States.

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In This Issue...

- 2** ARPA Discussion
- 3** New Water/Sewer Rates
- 4** Last Call for Climate Plan
- 5** Openings Delayed for Rockville Stations

MAYOR & COUNCIL
111 Maryland Ave.
Rockville, Maryland
20850-2364

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Virtual MLK Day Celebration to Feature Week of Service

Rockville honors Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy in January as the city holds its 50th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration with a virtual ceremony on Monday, Jan. 17 and a week of service activities.

King recognized the power of service, famously saying "Everyone can be great because everybody can serve." Observing Martin Luther King, Jr. Day through service is a way to begin each year with a commitment to making our community a better place.

The city has planned six service activities following social distancing guidelines: cleanups of a trail at Croydon Creek Nature Center; a Weed Warrior activity; a self-guided neighborhood cleanup; and making blankets for sick children, scarves for families in need and crafts for children in need. Find more information, including how to register, and discover other ways to give back to the community, at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

In addition, the city's Human Rights Commission is accepting nominations for two awards to be presented during the virtual celebration.

A high school student who lives in or attends school in Rockville and has worked to fulfill King's dream in their school or the community will receive the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Award. An individual, organization or business that has helped to improve the lives of people with disabilities in the City of Rockville, such as through efforts to improve accessibility or raise public awareness, will receive the F. Michael Taff Award.

Find and submit nomination forms at www.rockvillemd.gov/mlk. The submission deadline is Sunday, Dec. 5.

Lunar New Year: Save the Date to Celebrate

Celebrate Rockville's Asian cultures with performances, to-go activities and snacks at the city's Lunar New Year celebration.

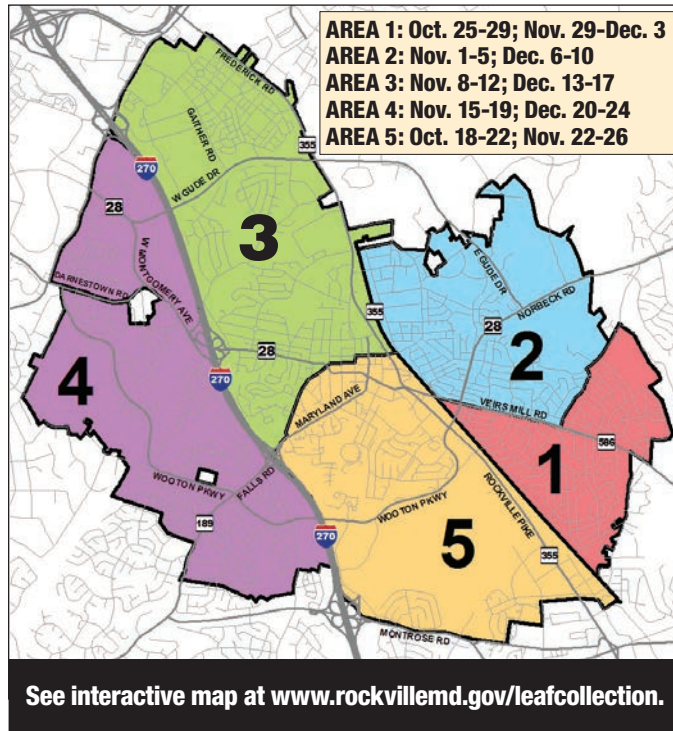
The annual celebration will be held from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre at Rockville Civic Center Park, 603 Edmonston Drive. Multicultural performances begin at 6:15 p.m.

Admission is free, but tickets will be required, with a maximum of four per household. Find additional details, as they become available, and tickets, beginning Monday, Jan. 10, at www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear.

In its 14th year, the Lunar New Year celebration is a source of pride for the city's Asian community and an educational opportunity for neighbors to learn about Asian culture. The city is organizing the celebration in partnership with Rockville's Asian Pacific American Task Force.

The celebration will mark 4720, the Year of the Tiger on the Chinese Zodiac calendar. One in three Rockville residents was born outside the United States and 54 percent of the city's foreign-born population was born in Asia, according to the city's planning department.

Practice good petiquette in our parks!



See interactive map at www.rockvillemd.gov/leafcollection.

Leave It to Us: Fall Leaf Collection Concludes This Month

The city is scheduled to conclude its fall leaf collection on Friday, Dec. 24, with crews completing the second of two rounds of vacuuming leaves from neighborhood curbs.

An interactive map at www.rockvillemd.gov/leaf collection allows residents to input their address and learn when their leaves will be collected.

Rake leaves next to, but out of, roadways, gutters and bike lanes, and away from parked vehicles. Leaves should be raked by 6 a.m. on the first day of their collection period, but no earlier than one week before the collection dates to avoid grass damage or fire hazards. Remove sticks and other objects from leaf piles. Avoid parking near leaf piles or other vehicles.

After the collection period

ends, use biodegradable paper lawn bags or 32-gallon trash cans (without plastic garbage bags) to set leaves out on your recycling and trash collection day, or use alternative disposal methods such as mulching or composting. Do not dump leaves, grass clippings or other yard waste into storm drains, along stream banks or directly into streams, where they can cause blockages that contribute to localized flooding or release nutrients that lead to fish kills.

Consider keeping some leaves where they fall or raking them into garden beds as free mulch. Leaves provide natural habitats for beneficial insects and release nutrients into the soil over time. Visit mygreenmontgomery.org/2021/five-great-ways-to-use-fall-leaves.

Mayor and Council to Continue ARPA Discussion, Seek Budget Input

The Mayor and Council are scheduled on Monday, Dec. 13 to continue their discussion of how to spend Rockville's portion of funds received through the federal American Rescue Plan Act.

ARPA's goal is to aid state and local governments in recovering from the budgetary, economic and financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Oct. 4, the Mayor and Council directed staff to apply nearly \$3.9 million of the city's \$9.6 million in ARPA funding toward water infrastructure improvements and assisting city water and sewer customers in paying past-due utility bills incurred during the pandemic. Read more about that decision in the article on page 3.

A public hearing on how to allocate the remaining \$5.7 million was held Oct. 25. Staff presented eligible spending categories and discussed potential ideas during the Mayor and Council meeting on Nov. 15. Find video of the discussion and hearing, and a staff report with the Dec. 13 agenda, when it is posted at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter. The Dec. 13 meeting will also include

a discussion of the Mayor and Council's budget survey results and budget priority setting.

Public participation in the budget process is a high priority for the Mayor and Council and city staff. A budget survey, in English and Spanish, at www.rockvillemd.gov/budget allows community members to identify their top budget priorities, initiatives for reducing the negative impacts of COVID-19 and options for maintaining a balanced budget. The public response to the survey will provide valuable input to the Mayor and Council for their Fiscal Year 2023 budget discussions.

The \$141.2 million budget for Fiscal Year 2022, which began July 1, keeps the city's real property tax rate of \$0.292 per \$100 of assessed valuation the same. All residential and commercial property owners pay this tax.

Additional public hearings and work sessions will be held in 2022. The Mayor and Council are scheduled to adopt the budget in May.

For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/budget or call the Finance Department at 240-314-8400. ✚

SIGN UP FOR THE CITY'S MANY NEWSLETTERS –

from environment to our newest volunteer news!

www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters

Grant Program Seeks Projects to Improve Communities Applications Accepted Starting Dec. 10

The city's matching grant program helps neighbors work together to accomplish common goals that support the health, vitality and inclusivity of the place they call home.

Community Empowerment Matching Grant applications will be accepted starting Friday, Dec. 10. The application deadline is Friday, Feb. 4, and approved grants will become available Wednesday, March 9.

Neighborhood, civic or homeowners associations, community groups, organized groups of neighbors and student groups are

eligible to apply. Neighbors and organizations willing to match funding through cash, in-kind donations and volunteer hours are also eligible.

Applications are reviewed and grants are awarded by the City Manager's Office. Grants typically range from \$500-\$1,000 each, must benefit a clearly identified area within the city limits and may address any or all of the following objectives:

- **Building community:** Projects that promote the development or sustainability of a neighborhood association or community group. Activities

that foster diversity, equity and inclusion.


- **Community improvement projects:** Projects that improve the shared space within a neighborhood or strengthen community identity. This may include landscape improvements and maintenance, natural features management, benches, painting, or certain exterior improvements. Bonus points will be awarded if two or more groups work together on a project.
- **Livability initiatives:** Projects that provide educational and outreach op-

portunities that strengthen social connections between neighbors or neighborhoods. This may include improving safety, addressing a neighborhood challenge or conflict, serving low-income seniors or finding ways to welcome newcomers to Rockville.

To see the objectives for matching grants, and for an application form and additional information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/community empowerment. For additional information, contact Hjarman Cordero at 240-314-8344 or hcordero@rockvillemd.gov. ✚

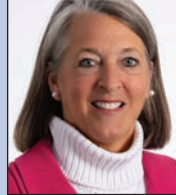


WHAT ARE WE CELEBRATING THIS MONTH? ... Human Rights day and month, of course, and the holidays, but also December is the month for AIDS awareness, root vegetables and exotic fruits, worldwide food service safety, ties, pears, and car donation. This is also the month for spiritual literacy, writing a business plan and Operation Santa Paws, encouraging us to donate items to our furry friends in animal shelters.



Mayor & Council

mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov




Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton
240-314-8291
bnewton@rockvillemd.gov



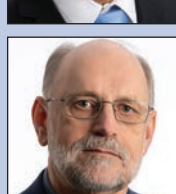
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Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg
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Councilmember David Myles
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Councilmember Mark Pierzchala
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mpierzchala@rockvillemd.gov

VIRTUAL MEETINGS ARE BEING HELD ONLINE. Meetings are closed to in-person attendance and are livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11.

Meetings Schedule: Mondays, Dec. 6 and 13 at 7 p.m., with a work session at 7 p.m. Dec. 20. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details.

The Dec. 13 meeting will be preceded by a drop-in session by telephone with Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and Councilmember David Myles from 5:30-6:30 p.m. To participate, sign up by 10 a.m. the day of the drop-in at www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Clerk-11/Sign-up-for-Dropin-Meetings-227.

If you wish to submit comments in writing for community forum or public hearings, please email mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov by 10 a.m. on the day of. Share comments live during community forum. Sign up by calling the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations at 240-314-8280 by 10 a.m. the day of the meeting. All comments will be acknowledged by the Mayor and Council at the meeting and added to the agenda for public viewing on the website. To practice responsible social distancing, Mayor and Council meetings will be conducted by teleconference and broadcast on Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, livestreamed at www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11, and available a day after each meeting at www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

Amendment Passed to Implement FAST-er Planning and Development Services

Rockville's Mayor and Council have unanimously approved an amendment that makes several changes to the city's zoning code to improve customers' experience with the Department of Planning and Development Services.

The amendment implements improvements identified through the FAST initiative to make Rockville's development review and permitting services "faster, accountable, smarter and transparent."

Modifications to the code make the process more efficient and allows city staff greater approval authority over reuse of existing buildings, small site changes, and/or minor expan-

sions of 5,000 square feet and less.

The amendment also allows several items that once required minor plan amendments to now go through a building permit or simpler process (adding generators, bicycle racks, seating benches, and pergolas, transformers, trash enclosures, sidewalks, and small storage sheds). The amendment also includes new definitions for research and development and life/science uses as well as a new parking standard for both.

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/2135/Development-Zoning to find out more about Rockville's development and zoning services. 🌱

Nonmeter Parking Fines Adjusted

The Mayor and Council in October approved increases to 22 different parking fines.

Each of the fines increased to \$60 for a first violation. The fine for expired meters remains at \$40. Penalties for late payment also were not changed. Among the increases were:

- *Parking without a permit.* Old fine: \$40. New fine: First violation: \$60. Subsequent violations: \$100.
- *Parking a large truck, bus, truck tractor or trailer on a residential street.* Old fine: First violation: \$20; second violation: \$50. Subsequent violations: \$100. New fine: First violation: \$60. Subsequent violations: \$120.
- *Parking outside the lines, in two spaces or double parking.* Old fine: \$40. New fine: \$60.
- *Parking impeding the flow of traffic.* Old fine: \$40. New fine: \$60.
- *Parking on a sidewalk or bikeway, within 30 feet of a traffic control device, e.g., a traffic signal at the*

side of a roadway; within 20 feet of a crosswalk; or within 5 feet of a driveway. Old fine: \$40. New fine: \$60.

- *Misuse of a visitor parking permit.* Old fine: \$40. New fine: First violation: \$60. Subsequent violations: \$100.
- *Parking past the posted time.* Old fine: \$40. New fine: \$60.

The last major change to city parking fines occurred in 2003, when many fines increased from \$25 to \$40.

The changes follow the Mayor and Council's adoption in June of fine increases, to \$250, for parking within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, within lane markings or between signs designating a fire lane, or in designated handicap parking spaces without a proper permit.

Find a staff report with a complete list of parking fines and video of the vote with the Oct. 18 agenda at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter. 🌱

City to Launch New Legistar Agenda System

Policy wonks, rejoice! The city will soon launch a new, more accessible webpage to host information on public meetings for the Mayor and Council, and boards, commissions and task forces.

While the new system — Legistar — will look new, it will have the same information that's always been available, only easier to navigate. The system is expected to roll out in the new year. Legistar and the existing agenda management system will oper-

ate concurrently while historical meeting data is migrated and archived to the new system.

The service will include agenda packets for each meeting ahead of time, video (where meetings are televised) and minutes. In addition, a tab will direct agenda-watchers to elected and appointed officials and their contact information.

For now, meeting information is available at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter. 🌱

Mayor and Council Approve New Water and Sewer Rates and Rate Structure

The Mayor and Council on Nov. 15 approved new rates for city water and sewer service and a new rate structure that creates three customer classes based on the cost of water and sewer service.

Find the rates and rate structure at www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/43148.

While the structure is changing, customers will not see a rate increase through the remainder of Fiscal Year 2022, which ends June 30. The January 2022 billing cycle will be the first to reflect the new rate structure.

The Mayor and Council directed staff to apply nearly \$2.7 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funds toward water infrastructure improvements. This will also help provide a weighted annual rate increase of just 2.1% for FY 2023 and FY 2024.

Under the new rates and structure, the city's water fund should meet the city's target of six months of operating reserves by the end of FY 2024 (on June 30, 2024). The sewer fund should meet the six-month operating reserves target by the end of FY 2023 (on June 30, 2023).

The new rates and structure follow a utility rate study that evaluated the cost of water and sewer service by property classification. The Mayor and Council held a public hearing on the proposed rates and new rate structure on Nov. 1. Find staff reports and video of the hearing and Mayor and Council discussion at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

The Mayor and Council on Oct. 4 directed city staff to use \$1.2 million of the \$9.6 million the city received through ARPA toward aiding customers in paying past-due utility bills. The aid will apply to bills issued by the city from March 2020-September 2021.

Learn more about ongoing discussions of how to allocate ARPA funds in the budget article on page 2. 🌱



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CITY ON ROCKVILLE 11

www.youtube.com/cityofrockville

Get Involved with the City

- **Send an email** to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov.
- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to the Mayor and Council, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. Find ways to give of your time and talents at www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer.

Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions.

While some meetings are canceled, other boards and commissions meetings will take place virtually. See times and dates, and ways to participate on city's online calendar: www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx.

- **Dec. 8 Planning Commission 7 p.m.** (Meetings will be held by teleconference. Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter for details closer to the meeting dates.)

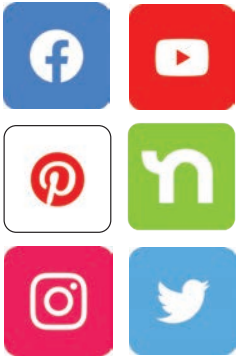
Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Appeals (2)
- Community Policing Advisory Board (3)
- Compensation Comm. (1)
- Cultural Arts Commission (2)
- Ethics Commission (1)
- Historic District Commi. (1)
- Human Rights Comm. (2)
- Recreation and Park Advisory (1)
- Retirement Board (1)
- Rockville Housing Enterprises (1)
- Traffic and Transportation Commission (1)

For more, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions or call 240-314-8280.

Connect with us on Social Media.



► SPEAK UP ◀

Report potential fraud, waste and abuse related to City of Rockville government services and employees.

Call 1-866-921-6714

Email rockvillemd@integritycounts.ca
Visit www.integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd
For more information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse.

Throwing It Away? Be Cart Smart

Throwing out plastic bags, clothes, garden hoses, needles or medical sharps? Please don't use the brown recycling cart – put them in the gray trash cart.

When using the gray cart to dispose of needles, help keep our recycling and trash collection crews safe. Workers can get stuck by medical sharps and syringes that are not in suitable disposal containers. To dispose of medical sharps and syringes, use containers made of heavy-duty plastic that close tightly with a puncture-proof lid. Label the container and place it in the middle of your household trash in the gray trash cart – or find a disposal program. For community guidelines about safe disposal, visit bit.ly/howtorecyclesharps.

Got a city recycling or trash cart that's falling apart? Damaged lift bars on city recycling or trash carts can cut customers and crew members. Call 240-314-8568. We'll replace it for you.

To find a nearby grocery store that accepts plastic bags for recycling, visit bit.ly/howtorecyclebags.

Season's Eating: Sustainable Cooking Tips

- When preparing a holiday feast follow these simple tips to make it more sustainable:
- Reduce food waste by buying and preparing only what you need.
 - Scrape fats, oils and grease into the trash or a sealable can. Never pour fats, oils or grease down the drain where they can lead to clogged pipes and sewer backups.
 - Bake several dishes in the oven at a time to save energy.
 - Use dishes, glassware, flatware, tablecloths and cloth napkins instead of disposable items.
 - Make creative centerpieces out of things you find around the house or in the yard, such as pine cones, leaves and branches.
 - Encourage guests to take home leftovers or store them in the freezer to enjoy later.

Recycling and Trash Collection Schedule for 2022

The city's recycling and trash collections usually occur Monday through Thursday. If a city holiday falls Monday through Thursday, all collections scheduled on or after the holiday will be made one day later than usual that week. In 2022, there are several city holidays when city government will be closed but recycling, trash and yard waste collections will take place as usual.

- **Friday, Dec. 31:** New Year's Day (observed). *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.
- **Monday, Jan. 17:** Martin Luther King Jr. Day. All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
- **Monday, Feb. 21:** Presidents Day. *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.
- **Monday, May 30:** Memorial Day. All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
- **Monday, June 20:** Juneteenth (observed). *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.
- **Monday, July 4:** Independence Day. All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
- **Monday, Sept. 5:** Labor Day. All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
- **Monday, Oct. 10:** Columbus Day. A federal holiday, but not a city holiday. *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.
- **Tuesday, Nov. 8:** Election Day. *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.
- **Friday, Nov. 11:** Veterans Day. *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.
- Thursday, Nov. 24: Thanksgiving Day. Thursday collections occur Friday. No other changes this week.
- **Monday, Dec. 26, 2022:** Christmas Day (observed). *No changes.* Collections as usual this week.

For more information about how the city collects recyclables, trash and yard waste, and to find 2022 holiday collection schedule calendars for each collection day, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

Last Call for Comments on Rockville's Climate Action Plan

Don't miss a chance to provide comments on Rockville's first draft Climate Action Plan.

Public comments will be accepted through Friday, Dec. 3 at www.rockvillemd.gov/climate, where the draft plan is available for review.

The Mayor and Council reviewed the plan during their meeting on Monday, Nov. 15. Find video of the discussion, a staff report and the plan with the Nov. 15 Mayor and Council agenda at www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

With the Climate Action Plan, city government is working with community members to develop a comprehensive list of actions to equitably reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and build community resiliency.

The Mayor and Council are expected to hold a discussion of the plan later this winter with possible adoption of the plan in early spring.

Over the past year, the city's Environmental Management Division held virtual public meetings and online office hours and conducted surveys to solicit community input on the plan. A virtual open house was held in the summer to get feedback from the community on the draft plan goals, a pathway to greenhouse gas reduction and a draft list of 41 actions. After a year of community engagement, the city received robust feedback from more than 575 respondents.

Find full results of the community feedback and view a draft list of actions at www.rockvillemd.gov/climate.

How to Think Green When You See the White Stuff

Environmentally Friendly Snow- and Ice-Removal Tips

Walking in a winter wonderland can be wonderful. But it can also prove hazardous. Follow these tips to keep your sidewalks and driveway snow- and ice-free, while minimizing the environmental impact:

Shovel Early, Shovel Often

Removing fresh snow before it has a chance to harden into ice is the best way to keep your pavement clear. Deicers work best on thin layers of snow or ice that need to be melted, so shovel first, break up any ice patches you can and then add the salt.

Apply Salt Sparingly

Scatter the deicer and leave space between the grains. A 12-ounce coffee mug full of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Using more than the recommended amount of salt won't speed up melting but can harm soil and water quality.

Buy Early and Check Labels

Buy your deicing product before the big storm, so you don't end up staring at empty shelves in the stores. Check



the label before you buy — although slightly more expensive, calcium chloride (CaCl2) requires less salt, works at lower temperatures and does not contain cyanide, unlike sodium chloride (NaCl, also known as rock salt). Urea is sometimes promoted as lawn-friendly, as excess urea will act as a fertilizer. However, the application rate for urea is far greater than your lawn would require, and most of the excess urea will only end up fertilizing the stream.

Avoid Kitty Litter and Ashes

While these products are environmentally friendly, they are only marginally effective at adding traction, and don't melt ice. If you need traction, a better option is to mix in a small amount of sand and use less salt.



Tree Recycling Makes the Holidays Greener

Rockville collects Christmas trees as part of its recycling collection and takes them to the Montgomery County Recycling Center, where they become mulch.

The mulch is available year-round for free, at the center, at 16105 Frederick Road, next to the Shady Grove Processing Facility and Transfer Station.

Place trees at the curb for pickup on regular recycling and trash collection days after removing all ornaments and metals, wires, stands and decorations, including

tinsel. Trees should not be bagged. There is no deadline for curbside collection of trees.

Artificial trees cannot be recycled and should be placed in the gray trash cart for regular weekly collection. Artificial trees that are too large to fit in the cart can be collected by appointment as one of six bulk collections allowed per year or taken to the transfer station.

For bulk-waste disposal information, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/bulkwaste.

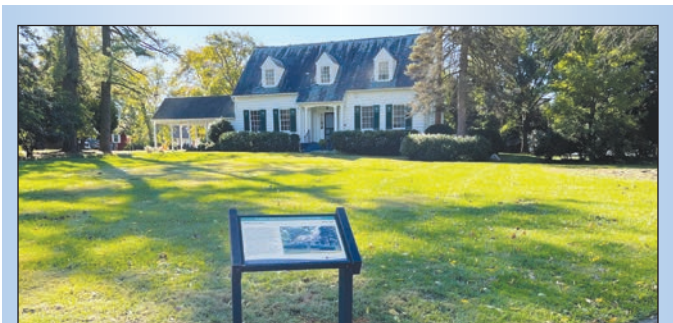
Season's Green-ings: How to Gift Greener and Recycle This Holiday Season

Do you plan on giving new electronics as a gift for the holidays?

For products that help reduce environmental impacts and energy costs, look for Energy Star-qualified and Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool-registered products. Find more green gift ideas from Montgomery County's Gift Outside the Box Campaign at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dep/gift-greener.html.

Rockville collects and recycles electronics, such as cell phones, computers, televisions and holiday lights. To make a bulk waste or electronics recycling collection appointment, call 240-314-8568.

For more information on recycling and trash service or holiday tree collection, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or see the article on this page.



MARKERS TO MARK CHESTNUT LODGE PARK'S HISTORY ... Signage has been placed in Chestnut Lodge Park so visitors can better understand the site's importance to Rockville history. The signs include explanations for existing buildings at the park — such as the city's first National Historic Landmark, pioneering psychiatrist Freida Fromm-Reichmann's cottage — as well as the Chestnut Lodge Sanitarium, which was destroyed by fire in 2009.



MORE NEWS, MORE OFTEN, ON YOUTUBE ... Now on Rockville 11's YouTube channel, (youtube.com/cityofrockville): The Mayor and Council issue a heartfelt "thank you" to city volunteers; the Rockville Sister Cities Corporation celebrates 64 years of sisterhood with Pinneberg, Germany; and revisit Veterans Day 2021's ceremony.

Public Meeting to Present Concept Plan for Town Center Thoroughfares

City staff will host a virtual public meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2 to present preliminary concept plans for a project that seeks to make two Rockville Town Center thoroughfares friendlier to businesses, pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Washington Street and East Middle Lane Road Diet Project creates bike lanes and on-street parking on North Washington Street between MD 355 and MD 28, and on East Middle Lane between North Washington Street and MD 355.

The project includes narrowing the two existing travel lanes to one lane in each direction and creating protected bike lanes, parking, and signage on both North Washington Street and East Middle Lane. It will also widen the sidewalk on the south side of East Middle Lane between North Washington Street and Maryland Avenue. Find the concept plan under Town Center Road Diets at www.rockvillemd.gov/visionzero.

For information on how to join the meeting online or by phone, find the Dec. 2 calendar listing at www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx.

The project is part of a Mayor and Council initiative and was developed through a consultant's study of how to improve the vitality of Town Center. The study followed recommendations by a panel of Urban Land Institute experts who visited the city in July 2019. Learn more at RockvilleReports.com/mayor-and-council-recommendations-for-improving-two-town-center-thoroughfares.

The project is also one of several to improve safety for people driving, walking, rolling, bicycling, and using transit as part of Vision Zero, the city's strategy to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy and fair mobility for all. ❄️



NEWS FLASH ABOUT A NEW FLASH ... City contractors installed flashing beacons this fall at a crosswalk on Wootton Parkway in front of Thomas S. Wootton High School. The beacons were installed in response to a call from neighborhood residents and the school community to improve pedestrian safety.

Staff Reassignments

continued from pg. 1...
all well."

Berg accepted a lateral transfer to become assistant city manager, increasing executive-level administrative capability in the City Manager's Office to better address Mayor and Council priorities and initiatives.

"I'm honored to have been asked to take a leadership role on the city manager's executive team," Berg said. "I love Rockville and I am excited to have the opportunity to contribute in this new way. Rockville has some of the best employees of any local gov-

ernment in the country, and I look forward to supporting their work."

Berg began her service to the City of Rockville in 2005, as an assistant to the city manager, before becoming director of communication in 2008, where she developed and managed the Public Information and Community Engagement teams.

She has a Master in Public Administration from the University of Kansas and a master's degree in communication from the University of Colorado.

"Marylou possesses strong skills that she has developed in the 16 years that she has

served the city," DiSpirito said. "As a career professional, Marylou endeavors to play a larger role in the city's overall success, while also being an advocate for employees through engagement and servant leadership."

She will report to Judge, assisting with special projects and initiatives, and taking on assigned and ongoing responsibilities.

The City of Rockville operates under a council-manager form of government. The city manager is responsible to the Mayor and the Council for the day-to-day management of city operations. ❄️

Reopening of Shady Grove, Rockville Metro Stations Delayed as Canopy Projects Continue

Customers on Metro's Red Line can now expect the Shady Grove and Rockville stations to reopen in mid-January 2022, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority announced in early November.

The stations closed in September and were expected to reopen in early December following repairs to the stations' platform canopies. Work on the project

was halted to allow Metro to bring additional trains into service from the Shady Grove Rail Yard to address a railcar shortage caused by the removal of Metro's 7000-series fleet. Additional quality control issues with the canopy's glass fiber reinforced concrete panels are also impacting the project schedule.

Limited free parking remains available at the Shady

Grove and Rockville stations while the stations are closed. Free shuttle buses are being provided during the closures, connecting the Shady Grove, Rockville, and Twinbrook stations. The Twinbrook station remains open. Red Line trains are operating between Twinbrook and Glenmont at normal service levels.

Learn more at wmata.com/rockvillecanopy. ❄️

Construction Continues on Baltimore Road Project as Roadway is Set to Reopen

Construction continues to improve safety and access along Baltimore Road, which is scheduled to reopen to vehicle and pedestrian traffic this month.

The road had been closed between Gladstone and Broadwood drives since June while a city contractor replaced the roadway culvert at the stream crossing near Rockville Cemetery, relocated water lines, installed storm drain connections and restored the stream.

Progress has also been made on the project's segment between First Street and Woodburn Road, where crews installed storm drainpipe and inlets, new curb and gutter, and pervious sidewalks.

Crews are now installing new sanitary sewer along westbound Baltimore Road, on the roadway's north side, between Woodburn Road and Edmonston Drive. Relocating the sewer, which is designed to avoid conflicts with the proposed storm drain, is expected to be completed by late January.

Impacts during this phase of construction will include lane closures with flagger operations during the day, temporary driveway closures, on-street parking restrictions and construction noise. Signs will be posted to notify motorists and residents of parking restrictions and road closures. Residents will be notified 48 hours in advance of driveway closures.

Storm drain and sidewalks between Woodburn Road and Edmonston Drive will be installed during a future phase of the project. Residents will be notified before that work begins.

Roadway resurfacing will be one of the final steps of the project, which is expected to be completed in spring 2022. Project progress is dependent on weather and supply-chain issues, which delayed the reopening of the previously closed segment of roadway.

Learn more at www.rockvillemd.gov/baltimoreroadproject.

Subscribe to 'Volunteer Rockville' for Good News About Giving Back

Looking to lend your time, talents and expertise to the City of Rockville? Look no farther than "Volunteer Rockville," a new email newsletter presenting volunteering news and opportunities to serve your city.

The newsletter arrives in your inbox every other month with news about nonprofits, city and community programs seeking volunteers, Student Service Learning credit opportunities, and profiles of volunteers and organizations serving as agents of change in our community.

To receive the newsletter, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters and select "Volunteering."

To read the first issue, visit bit.ly/VolNewsOct21.



PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM THE COLD ... Montgomery County issues hypothermia alerts when temperatures and/or wind chill are expected to be at or below 32 degrees. Call 301-279-8000 to report a safety concern for a person or a pet.

Health and Wellness, Coming Up at the Senior Center

Stay home and stay healthy with free online seminars from the Rockville Senior Center in December.

Register with the course number online at www.rockvillemd.gov/registration. Learn more about 60-plus programs, courses, activities and services at www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter or by calling 240-314-8800.

Stress Reduction/Meditation: Focus, relax and come to a more peaceful sense of being, with time for both meditation and discussion, in this virtual class. Presented by Betty Figliore.

Course #20133. Mini-session, 1-2 p.m. from Monday, Nov. 29 to Monday, Dec. 20. Cost, \$15 members and \$25 nonmembers.

Your Heart, Your Life Series. Session 3: Say Yes to Physical Activity: By the end of this free virtual third session, group members will have learned: why physical activity is good for heart and overall health; why physically active duration may vary for adults, adolescents and children; the benefits of brisk walking; and fitting physical activity into busy a schedule.

Course #20138, 1-2 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 14.

Glenview Mansion Art Gallery to Host Rockville Art League

The Rockville Art League Members' Juried Winter Show will be on display at the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery,

Dec. 5-Jan. 14: Meet the artists from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 5.

The ADA accessible gallery, on the second floor of Glenview Mansion at 603 Edmonston Drive, is open 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and closed on official city holidays.

Recreation and Parks Foundation Helps Residents Thrive Outside

What do soccer goals and gardening supplies have in common? In Rockville, they both have financial support from the Rockville Recreation and Parks Foundation.

As residents flocked outdoors during the pandemic, the need for expanded programs and parks increased. RRPFI helped Rockville residents stay healthy and active during this challenging time.

Over the past 13 years, RRPFI has supported Rockville by providing grants to the Department of Recreation and Parks to send kids to camp, expand a nature play area, improve ballfields, purchase sports equipment and much more.

RRPFI is a 501(c)(3) organization founded in 2008. Learn more at rrpfi.org.

ROCKVILLE SENIOR CENTER



HOLIDAY
BAZAAR

Sponsored by
Rockville Seniors, Inc.

Saturday, Dec. 4 • 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Handmade Crafts • Book Sale
Raffles • Plant Sale • and more!



Rockville Senior Center
1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville, MD 20850
240-314-8800 • www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter

Season's Celebrations at the Civic Center

A Rockville Holiday Classic and Holiday Tunes Provide Seasonal Entertainment This Month at the Rockville Civic Center

The Rockville Civic Ballet presents **"The Nutcracker."** 7:30 p.m. Fridays, Dec. 3 and 10; 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays, Dec. 4 and 11; 2 p.m. Sundays, Dec. 5 and 12. Tickets: \$17; 60 and older and children 12 and younger, \$13.

Join Clara on her magical journey. Directed by Eleanor Simpson and Erin Kwong.

Learn more about the Rockville Civic Ballet at friendsrcb.org.

"Home for the Holidays," presented by the Rockville Concert Band. 3

p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19.

Old classics and fun tunes for everyone to sing along and enjoy this special time of the year, directed by Juan Gallastegui. No tickets required, but a \$5 donation is suggested. Learn more about the concert band at rockvilleconcertband.org.

"Backyard Concert," presented by the Rockville Chorus. 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18.

The Rockville Chorus will perform a free outdoor "Backyard Concert," directed by Linda

Garrettson, on the patio adjacent to the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre Social Hall at Rockville Civic Center Park. Bring a chair and bundle up.

Learn more about performances and events at the Rockville Civic Center Park, visit www.rockvillemd.gov/theatre, by calling 240-314-8690, or in person at the box office, 2-6 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday. For more information, email theatre@rockvillemd.gov.

The theater is located at 603 Edmonston Drive.



Chorus to Hold Auditions

The Rockville Chorus will hold auditions for bass, tenor and alto voice parts on the evening of Monday, Jan. 10 for the 2022 spring session.

Contact arts programs supervisor Betty Wisda at bwisda@rockvillemd.gov to schedule an audition.

The Rockville Chorus is an established performing arts group of adult volunteers who hold weekly rehearsals at 7:30 p.m. Monday evenings. ✚

Skate Park to be Site of Latest Public Art Project

An artist is being sought to create a work of art to adorn the new Rockville Skate Park at 355 Martins Lane.

"The public artwork should seek to engage its audience and welcome visitors in a fun and unforgettable manner," the call for artists states.

The new 15,000-square-foot concrete skate park features a kidney bowl, manual pads, quarter pipes, radius wedge, rainbow grind rail, grind ledge, slappy curb and pole. The skate park is designed to be fun for all riders, no matter the age, style, skill level or wheel type.

The budget for the artwork

will be \$14,500, which covers design work, engineering, fabrication, delivery, site preparation, lighting, installation of the work at the site, as well as other associated expenses.

The final selection of artist and artwork will be made by the Mayor and Council.

See the call for artists application at arcg.is/08uSW9.

Visit www.rockvillemd.gov/skatepark for more information on membership, hours, park rules and lessons, and www.rockvillemd.gov/AIPP to learn about Rockville's Arts in Public Places program. ✚



LACE UP YOUR SKATES: THE TOWN SQUARE ICE RINK WILL SOON BE OPEN! Almost time to hit the ice — the Rockville Town Square ice rink will soon be open for the season at 131 Gibbs St., at Town Square plaza.

At 7,200 square feet and 120 feet long, the rink is the largest outdoor rink in Montgomery County and an annual attraction in winter for almost a decade.

Due to best practices that will be in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, skaters are urged to purchase tickets in advance. Outdoor restaurant tables and fencing facing the plaza have been removed to allow sufficient pathways for pedestrians.

Rink hours are noon-10 p.m. Monday to Thursday; noon-11 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$9 for children and seniors. Parking in Rockville Town Square garages is free for the first two hours.

For more information, visit www.rockvilleiceskating.com.

CITY OF ROCKVILLE AND
THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN TASK FORCE

PRESENTS 新年快乐

LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION



20
22

YEAR
OF THE
TIGER 虎

Thursday, Feb. 10
6-8 p.m.
F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre

Event is free, tickets required — limited to four per household. Reserve your tickets starting Jan. 10 at www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear

For more information:
www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear
Encuentre la información en
www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear
www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear
에서 정보를 얻으실 수 있습니다.
如欲了解更多信息, 请访问 www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear
Tìm hiểu thông tin tại
www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear
hoppa www.rockvillemd.gov/lunarnewyear



SISTERLY BONDS ... Rockville and Pinneberg, Germany, celebrated their 64th sister city anniversary and recognized the 30th anniversary of "On Site," a joint Rockville-Pinneberg Art in Public Places sculpture, Nov. 8 at Welsh Park. Nov. 8 is anniversary date for Rockville-Pinneberg's relationship. The event featured artwork created by Rockville elementary school students with the theme "the meaning of friendship." In the photo, Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton (L) and Hannelore Quigley (R), a member of RSCC's board of directors, award a prize to one of the young artists who took part.



SHOULD PARKLAND BE REQUIRED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT? The Mayor and Council want to know if public parkland should be required as part of new development projects in the City of Rockville and will hold two public information session on options to achieve additional parkland in Rockville at 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 2 and 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 7. See the online calendar at www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx for details.

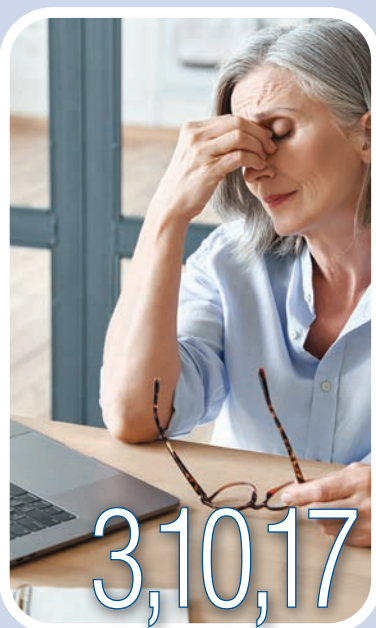
December CALENDAR

FACILITIES LEGEND:

- CC** Croydon Creek Nature Ctr., 852 Avery Rd., 240-314-8770.
- GM** Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8660.
- FSF** F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8690.
- LP** Lincoln Park Community Ctr., 357 Frederick Ave., 240-314-8780.

- CH** Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 240-314-5000.
- SR** Rockville Senior Ctr., 1150 Carnation Dr., 240-314-8800.
- SFC** Rockville Swim and Fitness Ctr., 355 Martins Lane, 240-314-8750.
- TF** Thomas Farm Community Ctr., 700 Falls Grove Dr., 240-314-8840.
- TC** Twinbrook Comm. Rec. Ctr., 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy., 240-314-8830.

- V** Virtual Program/Offering
- F** Facebook Live Event



3,10,17



3-5,10-12



7,21



19

2 V PUBLIC MEETING: WASHINGTON STREET AND EAST MIDDLE LANE ROAD DIET CONCEPT PLANS The Department of Public Works shares preliminary concept plans for the Washington Street and East Middle Lane road diets. *See article on page 5.* 6 p.m.

2,7 V SHOULD PARKLAND BE REQUIRED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT? The Mayor and Council want to hear from the community whether public parkland should be required as part of new development projects in the City of Rockville. *See online calendar for how to join.* 2 p.m. Dec. 2; 7 p.m. Dec. 7.

2,16 V POSITIVE AGING PROGRAM: WOMEN LIVING ALONE A support group where members support each other by listening, expressing concern, and offering tips, suggestions and advice. Call 240-314-8800 to register. Join virtually or by phone. Free. 1-2:30 p.m. **SR**

3,10,17 V POSITIVE AGING PROGRAM: MANAGING STRESS AFTER THE PANDEMIC An ongoing support and educational group to help cope with isolation, anxiety, depression and loss. Learn coping skills from a facilitator and each other. Join virtually or by phone. Meets every Friday. Free. 11 a.m.-noon. **SR**

3,4,5,10,11,12 ROCKVILLE CIVIC BALLET PRESENTS "THE NUT-CRACKER" *See article on page 6.* **FSF**

4 ROCKVILLE SENIOR CENTER'S HOLIDAY BAZAAR Homemade crafts, book sale, plant sale and more. *See ad on page 6.* 9 a.m.-4 p.m. **SR**

7,21 V DECLUTTERING Based on a curriculum by Elspeth Bell called "Challenging Clutter." Discuss what hampers getting rid of unneeded things. Share challenges; learn to organize and reduce belongings. Meets first and third Tuesday. 2:30-4 p.m. Free. **SR**

9,23 V LIVING ALONE A group where men and women living alone can socialize, discuss topics of interest, share challenges and support each other. Meets second and fourth Thursday of each month. 1-2:30 p.m. Free. **SR**

11 ROCKVILLE FARMERS MARKET SPECIAL WINTER EDITION A special winter edition of the Rockville Farmers Market. Jury parking lot at East Jefferson (MD 28) and Monroe streets. *See ad on page 5.* 9 a.m.-noon.

14 V YOUR HEART, YOUR LIFE SERIES, SESSION 3: SAY YES TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY An evidence-based program with lessons providing information for understanding, skill-building, self-assessment and goal setting for healthy lifestyle changes. Sign up for one or more sessions. Presented by Adventist HealthCare. 1 p.m.-2 p.m. **SR**

14,28 V POSITIVE AGING PROGRAM: BRAIN GAMES Work your brain and compete with peers in various games and puzzles. Meets second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Free. 2:30-4 p.m. **SR**

18 THE ROCKVILLE CHORUS PRESENTS "BACKYARD CONCERT" *See article on page 6.* Free. 2 p.m. **FSF**

19 ROCKVILLE CONCERT BAND PRESENTS "HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS" *See article on page 6.* 3-5 p.m. **FSF**

21 FAMILIES OUTSIDE: WINTER SOLSTICE HIKE Welcome the official arrival of winter at Croydon Creek Nature Center with a sundown trail hike. Ages 3 and older. Bring a flashlight. \$5R/\$6NR. 4:30-5:30 p.m. **CC**

24&31 CITY GOVERNMENT CLOSED In observance of Christmas and New Year's Day. *See article on page 1.*

Jan. 1 FIRST DAY HIKE Start the new year off on the right foot. Join a naturalist for a casual nature walk on the Heritage Trail (about 1 mile) on the first day of 2022. Bring water, appropriate footwear, a mask and be sure to dress for the weather. Ages 2 and older. \$4R/\$6NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

Jan. 3 CITY HALL TO REOPEN. Hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. *See article on page 1.* **CH**

R = Residents • NR = Nonresidents • MEM = Member • NM = Nonmember

FOR MORE INFO AND UP-TO-DATE EVENT LISTINGS: WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV/CALENDAR.ASPX

The Year in Review

continued from pg. 1...

Rockville's Mayor and Council issued a statement supporting the Asian American Pacific Islander community and immigrants, rejecting racism and bullying, and offering condolences in the wake of a mass shooting that killed eight people, including six women of Asian descent, on March 16 in Atlanta.

The Mayor and Council were set to begin their review of the Planning Commission's draft comprehensive plan update.

Eight parks in Rockville had newly installed bicycle racks, with another installation to come. Dogwood, Elwood Smith, Potomac Woods, Rockcrest, Welsh, Woodley Gardens and Woottons Mill parks each received a new rack. Rockville's newest park, RedGate, had two. A new bike rack was scheduled to be installed at Hillcrest Park following asphalt path repairs in spring.

APRIL

The process began to determine what RedGate Park's future should look like. The city launched a new website — and a survey — at engagerockville.com/

redgate-park to gather thoughts and ideas, and discuss what RedGate Park should become.

The Human Rights and Human Services Advisory commissions of the City of Rockville launched a community-wide survey at the direction of the Mayor and Council to assess the state of social justice, racism and bias in the city, as well as the availability and appropriateness of city services during the pandemic.

The city began work on a study of the Rockville Metro Station in coordination with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and Montgomery County. The process will result in recommendations for possible development and site improvements on WMATA-owned property at the station.

The results from a 2020 survey on the focus for Rockville's Climate Action Plan were in: Reducing greenhouse gas, addressing racial equity and protecting future generations, were cited by some of the 525 respondents.

State aid for renovations to Lincoln Park Community Center as well as education, and measures to combat climate change, were among the wins for Rockville during the Maryland General

Assembly session, which concluded this month.

Rockville's Mayor and Council called on state Comptroller Peter Franchot to vote against the state project to add toll lanes to interstates 270 and 495 between the American Legion Bridge and Frederick. In a letter, the Mayor and Council urged Franchot to join the Montgomery County Council in opposing the public-private partnership, or "P3," project.

MAY

The Rockville City Police Department's commitment to community policing continued in spring with work by the city's newly constituted Community Policing Advisory Board and training focused on helping community members.

After 17 years in the ground, Brood X cicadas were once again emerging in their trillions. Although indisputably creepy, with bulging red eyes and loudly distinctive drone, the insects are harmless to humans and pets.

In May and June, the city's Department of Public Works completed six new crosswalks along West Edmonston (two each at Carter Road and

Ritchie Parkway and one each at Curtis and Hardy places), improving safety along the route for students walking to Bayard Rustin Elementary School, which opened in 2018. The city also completed two new crosswalks at Harrington Road and one new crosswalk at Maxim Lane.

JUNE

The City of Rockville observed Juneteenth as a city holiday for the first time with a panel discussion and community service activities. In July 2020, the Mayor and Council approved a resolution making Rockville the first municipality in Maryland to recognize Juneteenth as a paid city holiday.

Angela Judge, formerly an assistant city manager with Elizabeth City, North Carolina, was appointed by City Manager Rob DiSpirito as Rockville's next deputy city manager. Judge began in her new role on June 14.

The new Rockville Skate Park officially opened for community use. The skate park features an entrance building with a family/gender-neutral restroom, lighting, landscaping, parking, a stormwater management facility and access road improvements.

continued on pg. 8...

Wheelbarrows at the Ready

Rockville's Garden Plots Will Soon be Available to Rent

If your yard's too small to cultivate the seasonal bounty you've always dreamed of, maybe it's time for an upgrade.

The City of Rockville has 159 garden plots, approximately 25-by-25 feet, available for rent at Woottons Mill Park for growing food and other plants.

The cost is \$80 per plot for nonresidents; Rockville residents pay \$70 per plot.

Registration for the garden plot program opens Tuesday, Jan. 11. The season runs April 1-Nov. 14.

The city provides water spigots and mulch; gardeners are responsible for fencing, weed barriers, hoses, tools and other gardening supplies.

Registration forms can be found at www.rockvillemd.gov/gardenplots. Call the Rockville Civic Center's main office at 240-314-8660 or email woottonsmill@rockvillemd.gov for more information.

Community Organizations Invited to Apply for Grants

The City of Rockville provides grants annually to local organizations that partner with the city to enhance quality of life of Rockville residents.

Nonprofits supporting the advancement of education and community engagement are welcome to apply. Applications are being accepted for Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023).

To be eligible for a grant, organizations must provide services to Rockville residents and complete an online application. Applicants will have the opportunity to speak in support of their grant request at a public hearing for the budget in spring 2022.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 17.

For more information, contact management assistant/community support advocate Melissa Wiak at 240-314-8106 or by email at mwiak@rockvillemd.gov.

Find an online application at www.rockvillemd.gov/communityorggrant.

Volunteers



Muchas Gracias • 非常感谢



SIGN UP FOR WEEKLY NEWS!
www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters



Questions, Concerns or Ideas?

Reach out to Rockville City Manager Rob DiSpirito at rdispirito@rockvillemd.gov or 240-314-8102.

Rockville Holiday Drive Continues into Gift-Giving Season

Donations are being accepted for the 2021 Holiday Drive, Rockville's annual push to help the community's hundreds of children and families in need.

This year, with the need greater than ever, the drive will continue, albeit with minor changes to keep everyone healthy and safe.

Normally, the Holiday Drive collects toys in December for the gift-giving holiday season. This year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the city is requesting monetary, gift card and book donations

only. Donations are tax deductible.

In December, your donations will help purchase Target gift cards and books for the holiday.

Here's how you can help:

- **Go online:** Easily donate online at bit.ly/HolidayDriveDonate.
- **Write a check:** Checks can be made payable to "City of Rockville" (with "Rockville Holiday Drive" in the memo line) and sent to Rockville Holiday Drive Fund, c/o Community Services Division, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.



In the past, the Holiday Drive has collected food and gifts, as pictured above, during the giving season. This year, because of the pandemic, the drive will collect donations only.

- **Collect books for gifts:** Organize a drive of new or gently used book for kids up to age 17.
- **Buy a gift card:** Donate \$20 gift cards from Target or Giant.
- **Donations drop-off:** City

Hall, by appointment only, by calling 240-314-8310, or at the city's three community centers.

For more information, contact Frederika Granger at fgranger@rockvillemd.gov. ❄️

Year in Review

continued from pg. 7...

A portion of Baltimore Road closed to vehicles and pedestrians for several months as part of a city project to improve safety and access along this corridor between Rockville Town Center and the city's east side. (See the page 5 article.)

Motorists could face significantly higher fines for illegally parking near fire hydrants, in fire lanes or in designated handicap parking spaces after the Mayor and Council approved increases that bring fines in the City of Rockville in line with those of neighboring jurisdictions

JULY

The Mayor and Council appointed Virginia attorney Robert E. Dawson as the city's corporate counsel, a title he will hold until he is admitted to the Maryland bar, when he will officially become Rockville's new city attorney.

AUGUST

The City of Rockville is now Maryland's fourth most populous incorporated place — down from third a decade ago, according to results of the 2020 census released in August. According to the census, which is conducted every 10 years, on April 1, 2020, the population of the City of Rockville totaled 67,117 people. This was an increase of 5,908 people (9.7%)

from 2010 when the city's population was 61,209.

The Mayor and Council adopted the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan update, following a yearslong process that involved hundreds of voices from the community, elected and appointed leaders, and city staff, which helped shape the final document.

SEPTEMBER

In their ongoing fight to bring awareness to the national impact of opioid addiction and signal hope for recovery, the Mayor and Council held several events throughout September as part of Rockville Goes Purple, the city's continuing campaign to highlight the nationwide impact and dangers of opioids.

Metro began demolishing and reconstructing the platform canopy at its Rockville station and repairing the canopy at Shady Grove. The Red Line is the oldest line in the Metrorail system and the canopies' concrete beam structures, original to construction in the 1980s, were deteriorating. (See the page 5 article.)

A portion of Mt. Vernon Place closed for four months as part of the city's improvements to the Mt. Vernon stormwater management facility.

A weekend of celebrations marked the opening of a new destination in the city — the Rock East District, which

gathers Rockville's artists, professionals, makers and tradespeople together into a defined geographic location. The district, which runs along East Gude Drive from Frederick Road to Norbeck Road, includes more than 60 area businesses, or "makers and traders," as well as parks and trails.

Spikes in the COVID-19 delta variant led DiSpirito to cancel two highly attended October special events. "In the interest of better assuring the health and safety of our residents, visitors and city employees in the face of the extremely concerning recent trends with this COVID-19 pandemic, as city manager I am today canceling both of the city's high-attendance public events scheduled for this fall: Rocktoberfest and the annual Antique and Classic Car Show," DiSpirito said in a message to the Mayor and Council.

The city began construction to install bicycle lanes in both directions on Maryland Avenue between South Washington Street and Great Falls Road.

OCTOBER

Rockville elected officials joined Peerless Rockville and community members to celebrate the designation of the former home of pioneering psychiatrist Frieda Fromm-Reichmann as Rockville's first National Historic

Landmark.

The city reminded residents about flooding risks after parts of Rockville experienced devastating flooding from the remnants of Hurricane Ida, which blew through the city as a tropical depression on Sept. 1.

Stacey Webster, the city's deputy chief financial officer and a longtime member of Rockville's finance department, became the city's next chief financial officer/director of finance, DiSpirito announced.

The F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Festival honored prolific award-winning author John Edgar Wideman with the 2021 F. Scott Fitzgerald Award for Outstanding Achievement in American Literature.

Road closures in Rockville that allow outdoor dining on Gibbs Street and East Montgomery Avenue will remain in place indefinitely, Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton told the community.

NOVEMBER

Employees of the City of Rockville were required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Nov. 15, unless exempt for religious or medical reasons, under a policy adopted by the Mayor and Council.

DECEMBER

See December's highlights in this edition!



Get Into It

City Manager: Rob DiSpirito
Deputy City Manager: Angela Judge
Assistant City Manager: Marylou Berg
Director of Communication: Kathy Kirk-Dantzer

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BACK IN THE DAY ... Rockville Councilmember (now mayor) Bridget Donnell Newton was named president of the Montgomery County Chapter, and district vice president for District 5, of the Maryland Municipal League, November 2012's "Rockville Reports" announced. MML is nonpartisan association representing the state's 157 municipalities and two special taxing districts. Newton joined Mayor Phyllis Marcuccio on the MML board of directors.